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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, R & E

DATE: 13 April 1949

FROM : Chief, Global Survey Group

SUBJECT: Intelligence Production Requirements

Reference: Memorandum, 14 March 1949

*Intell
Prod.*

1. Any effort to achieve greater foresight and coordination in intelligence production planning is commendable. Admittedly such planning hitherto has consisted primarily of the scheduling of specific projects as the need became self-evident, as they were requested, or as producing units volunteered to undertake them. Except as regards specific requests, the governing consideration has been the willingness and ability of producing units to produce acceptable results rather than consideration of what they ought to be doing.

2. It would appear that recognition of the need for intelligence production of the sort referred to in the Reference could occur only in one of the following ways:

a. ORE's own perception of an emergent situation requiring elucidation.

b. Communication to ORE of the immediate or anticipated intelligence needs of such bodies as the NSC, NSRB, or Joint Staff.

c. ORE's own realization of inadequacies in the body of fundamental intelligence required by ORE as a point of departure for specific estimates initiated as under a or b.

3. Manifestly, intelligence production requirements pertaining to category a are not amenable to long-term planning. As obviously, intelligence production requirements pertaining to category b can be anticipated only insofar as the planning body concerned is itself able to anticipate its future problems and intelligence needs. Experience in this respect is not encouraging, especially with regard to the NSC. The long-term program originally undertaken by the NSC Staff has been entirely overridden by more urgent current projects, overtaken by events, and discarded. The present agenda of the NSC affords no basis for long-term production planning (nor does that of the Policy Planning Staff, whose function was supposed to be exclusively long-term). The NSC Staff is presently seeking to devise a new long-term program for itself, but, in the light of experience, the validity and viability of such a program will be dubious. That being the case, it would be presumptuous indeed for ORE to attempt to prescribe the long-term

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intelligence interests of the NSC. No realistic planning in that respect is possible until the NSC Staff is able to furnish us a valid basis.

4. ORE is capable of valid long-term planning with respect to category c, but it must be recognized that, insofar as this category refers to staff rather than basic intelligence, it is to staff intelligence of a very basic character, and that its function is primarily the clarification of ORE's own thought rather than the service of such bodies as the NSC. Intelligence production of this sort might be distributed to the offices of NSC members, but they could not be expected to read it, and rightly so.

5. Considering the limitations upon valid long-term intelligence production planning indicated above, I am concerned lest the emphasis upon planned production indicated in the Reference result in a further diversion of ORE effort from its primary mission. The primary mission of ORE is "final synthesis" (high level appreciation) in direct service to the NSC and cognate bodies, precisely that area in which valid long-term planning is impossible. It is already recognized that too much effort is being diverted from this mission to the production of current intelligence. The tendency of the program envisaged in the Reference is an additional diversion of effort in the direction of basic intelligence. The indicated result is failure to accomplish the primary mission through greater emphasis upon incidental (and less difficult) functions.

6. Even supposing that ORE could, from its own imagination, devise a meaningful "over-all list of national intelligence production requirements", the procedure indicated in paragraph 4 of the Reference is incapable of producing a valid result. It is unrealistic and presumptuous to suppose that the NSC itself will or should give consideration to such a list. In any case, only a polite and perfunctory acquiescence without serious consideration could be expected. In this proposal the cart is before the horse, as a re-reading of the passage cited in justification from the Eberstadt Report would show. What is needed is not that CIA should tell the NSC what the NSC's intelligence requirements are, but that CIA should participate in NSC deliberations in such a way as to be able to learn from the NSC what NSC requirements are and plan accordingly. And contact for this purpose must be maintained on a level of substantive competence and participation, not that of policy formulation.

7. Finally, I am concerned about the duplication of function evident in the Reference, between the Plans and Policy Staff and the Staff Intelligence Group. I find in the functional statements no warrant for this intrusion by S/PP into the essential responsibilities of G/SI. In times past when I have questioned unfortunate ambiguities

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in those statements, they have always been interpreted in a sense contrary to the present development. It is only after years of quiescence that S/PP has assumed this function, which on this account alone must be regarded as a new departure. But, regardless of this point, consider the practical, as opposed to the theoretical, aspects of the matter. It is the normal practice of G/GS to submit to G/SI intelligence production requirements as they become apparent to it through either its surveillance of the situation or its contacts with such bodies as the NSC Staff. (This seed too often falls on stony ground by reason of the unwillingness or inability of the appropriate producing unit to meet the requirement, but that is another problem.) G/GS has nothing to submit to S/PP in response to the Reference that has not already been submitted to G/SI. If and when the NSC Staff produces a new long-term program I will necessarily transmit it to G/SI as a basis for the initiation of specific projects. What is to be gained by its duplicate submission to S/PP for duplicate planning of a rather abstract character?

8. In short, I regard the function assumed by S/PP in the Reference as superfluous, and its specific proposals as highly unrealistic and impractical. This sort of planning is an essential function of the intelligence production process, in which S/PP has no part. It can be done effectively only by persons having responsibilities in that process, in relation to those responsibilities. As I believe the Reference shows, it cannot be done realistically by what should be essentially a secretariat for processing policy papers.

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